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Sent: Sunday, June 26, 2011 7:59 PM
To: Farak, Sonja (DPH)
Subject: GIC Summer News

State Employee Health Insurance Re-enrollment and Incentive to Join Limited Network Plans an Overwhelming Success

Continuing to offer high quality health insurance options while controlling costs for both the Commonwealth and state employees was the goal for this year's annual enrollment: by all measures the goal was met with an overwhelming success. Active state employees who resided in Massachusetts and had GIC health insurance were required to re-enroll in health insurance for coverage effective July 1, 2011. Employees were given an incentive of a three-month premium holiday – free health insurance – if they enrolled in one of the GIC's six limited network plans. Not only did over 99% of employees re-enroll in health insurance, but over thirty-one percent of these employees elected to save money and chose a less expensive, limited network plan, which will save the Commonwealth millions of dollars for the year. [Read more...](#)

Thank You GIC Coordinators!

Congratulations and thank you to the over 700 GIC state benefit coordinators for making this year's health insurance re-enrollment a success! Coordinators were on the front line during annual enrollment - answering employees' questions, helping them weigh their options and making sure re-enrollment forms were completed and returned. Coordinators' support and cooperation was instrumental in achieving an almost 100% health insurance re-enrollment. The GIC sends a big "thank you" for your efforts!

Tufts Health Plan Scholarship Opportunity

If your child is attending college full time and pursuing a career in health care, particularly the allied health field, encourage him or her to apply for one of two \$2,500 Tufts Health Plan scholarships. To be eligible, the student must be GIC-eligible with a parent or legal guardian enrolled in one of the GIC's health plans. [Read more...](#)

Two New Commissioners Share Their Perspectives on the GIC's Role in Health Care Reform

New Commissioners Kevin Drake and Candace Reddy may have different constituent concerns, but are on the same page about ways the GIC can play a role in health care reform. Commissioner Kevin Drake is a state union representative to the Commission who recently filled the Council 93, AFSCME, AFL-CIO position. Candace Reddy is the new designee for Jay Gonzalez, Secretary of Administration and Finance. Both of the newest Commissioners are favorable about the GIC's limited network plan options and feel that controlling costs while maintaining quality coverage are important goals of the Commission. [Read more...](#)

Weigh the Risks Before Electing to be Induced or Have a Caesarean

U.S. labor induction rates have more than doubled in a sixteen year period and state caesarean rates increased to one in three births from one in five in a twelve year period, according to a National Vital Statistics Report and The Massachusetts Department of Public Health. These increases have corresponded with a significant fall in the mean birth weights of newborns. Studies suggest that patient and physician convenience, coupled with the fee-for-service payment model, where caesarean (c-sections) cost an average of \$3,500 more than vaginal deliveries, are likely drivers of these alarming trends. [Read more...](#)

Payment Reform and What Could Change in Health Care Delivery

One of Governor Deval Patrick's major goals for his second term is health care payment reform and cost containment. In the last ten fiscal years, growth in state spending for health care, including the GIC, has increased by 76%, while higher

education, public health, and environmental programs have suffered major cuts, according to The Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center. [Read more...](#)

WellMASS Downsizes Waistlines

The GIC's WellMASS weight loss pilot program, held at Boston's McCormack Building was a popular program that produced results. Held in the fall, winter and spring, total weight loss across all 86 participants who stayed through the duration of the program was 854 pounds. Participants lost between 1.93 and 13.8 percent of their total body weight. [Read more...](#)

The summer 2011 issue of For Your Benefit includes these topics and more. See the attached link for a copy of the newsletter. Printed copies will be available through the GIC Coordinator in your benefits office at the end of June.